



# Department of Justice

## High-Risk Metropolitan Area Interoperability Assistance Project

### Honolulu, Hawaii

#### Addressing Interoperability

The Department of Justice (DOJ) Wireless Management Office (WMO) is working to improve long-term federal interagency communications across the Nation. As an interim step, and as a response to a request from the House/Senate CJS Appropriations Subcommittee staff, the DOJ WMO has been leading the High-Risk Metropolitan Area Interoperability Assistance Project (“25 Cities”) to provide targeted cities with basic and immediate interagency communications capabilities among local, state, and federal agencies during emergency response. Twenty-five cities were selected using criteria that included perceived risk and population size. As stakeholders in 1 of the 25 cities, Honolulu metropolitan area, local, state, and federal public safety agencies have been working collaboratively with the DOJ WMO to address basic interoperable communications.

#### Participating Agencies

Partnership among Honolulu area local, state, and federal public safety agencies has been instrumental in the development of comprehensive interoperability solution sets. Participating agencies have included—

- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF)
- Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
- Hawaii State Civil Defense
- Honolulu Emergency Medical Services
- Honolulu Fire Department
- Honolulu Police Department
- Honolulu Sheriff's Division
- Oahu Civil Defense Agency
- Regional Operations Command and Control Center
- U.S. Coast Guard
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)
- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
- U.S. Marshals Service (USMS)
- U.S. Secret Service (USSS)

#### Key Successes

DOJ and area stakeholders successfully achieved basic interoperability and emergency response communications improvements in the Honolulu metropolitan area through the implementation of two interoperability solutions. The solutions include a new interoperability network and upgraded mobile resources. Additionally, in the course of meeting this project's interoperability goals, stakeholders were able to leverage and expand the working relationships among local, state, and federal agencies to address interoperability objectives for the area.

For the first solution, DOJ worked with the State of Hawaii to plan and purchase equipment to establish a fixed interoperability network. The first part of this solution is a free space optical (FSO) network between four buildings in downtown Honolulu: Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole (PJKK) Federal Office Building, Leiopapa A Kamehameha State Office Tower, Honolulu Municipal Building, and Honolulu Police Department Alapai Dispatch. The FSO network communications links provide direct communications between radio users and dispatchers through one of the four network nodes.

To manage interagency communications on the fixed interoperability network, an ACU-1000 audio switch was connected to the network to allow dispatchers to patch participating agencies' radio systems

via the FSO network. The FSO network offers participating agencies additional bandwidth for future use of advanced information sharing, such as streaming video and large data transfers.

For those federal agencies without direct connections to the FSO network, a 125 watt VHF conventional narrowband repeater was implemented and connected to the network. An additional 125 watt VHF conventional digital narrowband repeater is being installed in the summer of 2006. Federal agencies that can access the FSO network via the federal interoperability channel include ATF, CBP, DEA (via dual-band mobile radios), FBI, ICE, USMS, and USSS. The Honolulu Fire Department has also authorized the use of one of their VHF island wide frequencies for interoperability use.

An additional interoperability solution provided radios and supporting accessories for implementation into an FBI mobile response vehicle. This additional equipment increases the capabilities of an existing deployable audio switch, better preparing agencies to interoperate with other first responders in remote areas. In spring 2006, DOJ also purchased a 125 watt repeater to be used in this mobile configuration using a federal law enforcement plan frequency.

To coordinate common operating procedures for the new interoperability solutions, DOJ worked with local, state, and federal agencies. This collaborative effort resulted in the development of operational guidance documents to address rules of use for operating on the fixed interoperability network and deploying mobile resources. Stakeholders continue to meet to discuss operational use of interoperability solutions in the Honolulu metropolitan area.

#### Moving Forward

The cooperation and support between participating agencies and DOJ WMO provided scalable solutions designed to give additional agencies future access to the interoperability solutions. Sustained operations, maintenance, and support of these interoperability solutions will be coordinated by key stakeholders. These efforts, along with plans to add advanced information sharing capabilities (e.g., data and video transfer) to the FSO network, will ensure continued improvements to interoperable communications and information sharing among public safety agencies in the Honolulu metropolitan area.

#### Contact Information

If you would like to know more about this initiative and the interoperability solutions, please contact—

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